

# ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE



## OPEN SPACE PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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**PREPARED BY  
THE ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE STEERING COMMITTEE**

INCLUDING:

- PRIORITY SITES
- OPPORTUNITIES LIST
- TRAILS OPPORTUNITIES
- ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

**JULY 2004**

The Alexandria Open Space Steering Committee was asked by the City Manager as a part of our work in this first year to develop a list of sites in the City that merit attention because they, contain open space features that convey public benefit to the community. A subgroup of the Steering Committee spent several months doing on the ground investigations of potential candidate sites. A list of these sites follows but they are offered with several caveats.

First, it should be noted that information given relative to any of these properties is from publicly available sources and as a group of citizens with limited access to information and resources, we cannot verify the accuracy of specific descriptions, ownership or characterizations that are related in this document. We recommend that further work be done by City staff to verify these details as each property becomes ripe for consideration.

Second, we note that the Open Space Plan adopted by the Alexandria City Council in the spring of 2003 specifically addresses a need to develop strategies and goals for the protection of a number of important open space sites that are held by private citizens or institutions. We have included some such sites in this document and know that doing so may cause questions and raise concerns with some property owners. Our intent in listing these sites is to underscore that they possess characteristics that are important to the overall character of our community and that there is a full range of conservation tools available if the owners choose to preserve these aspects of their property. These property owners are being contacted by mail about their inclusion on this list.

This report is the recommendation by the Open Space Steering Committee which begins a process of review by the Alexandria City Council and the public related to opportunities for preserving open space within the City. The report is not intended to imply that City Council will take specific action on any of the specific properties that the report identifies below. Rather, the report's listing of properties is only a recognition that the properties are viewed by the Committee as possessing important open space values and as representing valuable open space resources.

The properties listed in this document are only those that seemed obvious to us for inclusion in this first iteration. We note that this Steering Committee has been in operation only since October of 2003 and in the intervening time we have worked to lay important groundwork for the broad scope of the open space agenda in this community. We expect that this candidate list will change over time, with properties being removed for some reason and others being added. As an example, many oversized properties, especially not for profit institutional lands such as churches, schools, and utilities, were not identified here because we had no basis to believe they might be developed to their zoned potential in any time soon. We fully expect that candidate sites will be offered from all parts of the City by members of the community over the coming years and we welcome that. In particular we urge creative thinking in the whole of our community, particularly in areas of the City where there seems to be little in the way of open space assets, to help us to find places and ways to reclaim open space. We also expect that unforeseen opportunities will arise and sites not on this list will merit attention.

The Steering Committee encourages the City to move forward to protect the most important public aspects of each parcel using the full range of tools, including right of first refusal, easements, beneficial development, etc. If parts of these sites are developed, the open space aspects should drive that development process as a prime consideration. Real estate matters in Alexandria are currently very volatile and consequently create a very complicated dynamic. Timing, cost, availability of public resources, location of property, opportunities for partnerships with others, engagement of the public in site selection and negotiations leading to property sale are all factors that must be considered by the City Council in reaching final parcel decisions.

In this document we have set out to identify, describe, and group potential future open space properties consistent with the criteria specified in the recommendations of the Alexandria Open Space Plan.

Goal 2 of the Open Space Plan recommends using the following selection criteria for identifying privately-owned land suitable for acquisition or other protection by the City for parkland/open space use:

Privately owned land near or adjacent to existing parks and trails

- 1.
2. Near or adjacent to existing schools
3. Near or adjacent to natural resource areas
4. At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
5. Next to institutional properties with extensive open space, valuable natural resources, and/or potential public access
6. Adjacent to or linking existing or proposed trails or greenways
7. Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for pocket parks, gardens, green spaces, and playgrounds
8. Lands with significant trees, sloping-terrain, and other natural resource features
9. Properties with known or potential historic or cultural significance
10. Lands in areas identified in the Needs Assessment as those with a high need for open space
11. Excess rights-of-way
12. Open space and trail connections adjacent to or linking open spaces, natural areas, greenways and trails in Arlington, or Fairfax Counties

## **Search Approach**

To most efficiently review the entire city, a subcommittee was assembled and broke the city into several sections for on-the ground review.

For protection opportunities, we documented seven "considerations," or necessary pieces of information, to help evaluate and group properties. This level of information is not provided for all of the opportunities sites listed. The seven categories are presented below and are noted in the footer on each page for reference:

The property location and address;

- A.
- B. A description of the property, including unique environmental features that are observable;
- C. Descriptions of all development;
- D. Parking availability;
- E. Possible future uses;
- F. Property assessment, if available; and
- G. Comments, if appropriate.

The following factors did, to some degree, limit the searches conducted:

Winter weather limited the ability to visit each site.

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- Limited information was available about properties that were not "inside" the Open Space Plan "Green Crescent" or adjacent to existing parks/open space areas.

- We did not have historical or recent information for every property.
- Unknown "situational" information about current owner/developer plans or intentions might significantly change priorities for purchase or easement.
- We did not ask owners or other knowledgeable individuals about each property's situation or probable disposition.
- We could not trespass on to the properties.

### **General Open Space Observations**

Denser areas of the City, such as Del Ray and Old Town, are noticeably absent of neighborhood pocket parks. Park and open space re-greening, (that is creating parks or open space from land that currently may have another commercial or residential use) is essential in established neighborhoods. Infill development of some over-zoned properties will fundamentally change the open space ambiance and character of neighborhoods such as Seminary Hill and Northridge/ Beverly Hills. One of the biggest challenges to implementing the concept of the continuous "Green Crescent", which is a foundation of the Open Space Plan, will come from potential opposition to public open space connector trails and the attendant easements that might be required for these routes on private property in residential neighborhoods. Yet trails and pedestrian connections are imperative for the long term and easier to achieve than other open space goals.

### **Organization of this Report**

Open space opportunities are presented in four groups:

#### **1. Priority Sites**

This list of properties, representing all areas of the City, was selected by the subcommittee for close consideration and scoring by the full Committee. They are either listed in the Open Space Plan or otherwise present themselves as obvious priority sites. As priorities, these properties were discussed individually by the Committee and scored based on the selection criteria under Goal 2 of the Open Space Plan.

#### **2. Open Space Opportunities**

In addition to the Priority Site list, the subcommittee listed a large number of additional sites in the City which are worthy of attention because of their potential open space features. Many of these sites have not been reviewed as closely as the ones on the Priority Sites list, but should be reviewed in the future by the Committee. We expect this list to grow as community input is sought in the coming year.

#### **3. Trails Opportunities**

Trail segments are listed separately from the above categories because they deserve special attention. Achieving connections through the City for non-vehicular travel is one of the central goals of the Open Space Plan. Many of the trail connections or new segment opportunities listed in this document are included in either the Open Space Plan or the Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use trail Master Plan, adopted by City Council in 1998.

#### **4. Additional Easement and Reclamation Opportunities**

This group of additional land areas deserving attention is comprised of a variety of open space opportunities. They are smaller areas and may not need immediate attention. However, they are known to Committee members, have been discussed in the past, and have not escaped our attention. "Reclamation" opportunities are areas owned by the City that may simply need improvements or encroachment evictions to become usable public open space areas.

The Priority Sites are listed in their ranked order, following Committee action based on the Open Space Plan criteria. The properties listed in the other categories are not presented in any particular order. The Open Space Steering Committee recognizes that the City cannot purchase or acquire easements on all of the properties described in this document. Thus, this report lists as many recommended options for City consideration at this time. We expect this list to change, evolve and grow over time. We also expect that some of these properties will be developed in whole or in part and that all tools available, from easements to partial purchase and good planning, will be brought to bear on them in order to preserve the important open space attributes we now enjoy.

## **I. PRIORITY SITES**

The following is a list of "Priority Sites" that the Committee recommends for City Council consideration. Our listing of these properties is based upon our view that the properties possess very important open space values, and that the City, working with the property owners, should explore the alternative means that may be available to achieve the preservation of those values.

The following ten properties were selected by the Committee for special consideration. They were proposed by a subcommittee as priorities, and researched individually. They were then discussed by the full committee and scored according to the selection criteria included under Goal 2 of the Open Space Plan. The ten sites are grouped, based on their scores, into three categories: Immediate Priority, Priority and Other Important Sites.

### **IMMEDIATE PRIORITY**

These two sites are considered the highest priority for attention. Both listings relate to the City's waterfront, which is our key open space and recreation asset, and represent a value to the City as a whole. The Committee's message to the City here is that immediate action is warranted.

#### **1. Waterfront Lots -Seven+lots on Potomac River**

- A. Addresses: 200 Strand; 204 Strand; 208 Strand; 210 Strand; #0 Prince St.; 1 King St.; 2 King St.
- B. #210 Strand is an abandoned boat house; 200, 204, and 208 Strand is a parking lot; #0 Prince is a gun shop and an office for the "Dandy" boat; 1 & 2 King Street are owned by the Old Dominion Boat Club.
- C. #0 Prince has a former restaurant/club on pilings, with ground level rented for office space for the Dandy and Marianne dinner boats; 1 King St. has a private boat club, restaurant; 2 King St. has private parking lot.
- D. Private or public parking lots are on most lots. Street parking and public parking on Strand.
- E. Fulfills Goals 4 and 10 of the Open Space Plan -conservation and expansion of riverfront and links and expands the waterfront trail. Potential boating launch. opportunities (e.g., kayaking, canoeing). In the event full fee acquisition were possible this could complete green framing of the Torpedo Factory blocks to offset future development on Robinson Terminal properties north and south parcels.
- F. City 2004 assessments: #0 Prince (\$650,700); 210 Strand (\$382,200); 200-208 Strand (\$953,900); 1 King (\$2,212,000); 2 King (\$1,541,000). All parcels have a clouded title and are in a court suit with the Federal govt.
- G. #0 Prince and 210 Strand are highest priority, acquire others with purchase or land swap. Would complete a coordinated waterfront park and walkway system. Has benefits for the entire city and tourism market.

#### **Mount Vernon Trail Waterfront Alignment**

#### **2.**

- A. 1204-1206 South Washington Hunting Point Apartment Complex. Map # 083.02-01-04 & 07
- B. Area is included within 2 parcels. It is on the waterfront side of the apartment buildings with Potomac River frontage of 653 ft. The other sides are adjacent to Porto Vecchio (247 ft.) and Jones Point wetlands. In Potomac River flood plain. Approximate 5 acres. Zoned RC. Currently owned by VDOT which plans to sell entire property in 2005.

- C. Included within this area are tennis courts, swimming pool, parking lot, driveway, temporary 9-foot wide asphalt Mount Vernon path, and temporary construction trailers.
- D. Nearest public parking is on South Royal Street. Future parking will be available at Jones Point.
- E. Permanent alignment along waterfront for Mount Vernon Trail and possible pedestrian paths closer to waterfront. Currently there are plans in this specific area to reconstruct wetlands as mitigation for some lost to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project. We strongly suggest a joint planning effort with those parties involved in the bridge project to find a creative way to accomplish both goals: the wetlands and this trail.
- F. Appropriate for easement. 1206 Washington (no apartment building) 2004 assessment is \$1.3 million. 1204 Washington "land only" 2004 assessment is \$3.2 million.
- G. Easement with public access is appropriate.

### **PRIORITY**

This group includes strong candidates for priority attention and, depending on resources and threat level, a variety of tools may be appropriate for one or more of these sites, including partnerships, bargain sales, donations, easement, beneficial development, and outright acquisition. However it is done, the City should move over the next year to protect open space values for which the properties in this group have been cited.

#### **Wide Trail/Park -Between Ivor Lane and Seminary Road**

- 3.
  - A. 4575 & 4609 Seminary Rd; and one large unnumbered open space track attached to and east of the Seminary Forest Apartments.
  - B. Many large trees and heavy vegetation. Refuge for urban wildlife. Cited in Open Space Plan for a north/south trail from Braddock to Seminary by fire station.
  - C. Area zoned R-8. City owns two lots already (fire station, vacant lot). Owners of Seminary Forest Apartments own the large 6+ acres.
  - D. Parking on Braddock/Ivor end not a problem. Parking near fire station may be across Seminary Rd.
  - E. Trail within long park.
  - F. 2004 assessment is \$1.5 million.
  - G. Recent land sales and inquiries by developers to Planning and Zoning Dept. make this imminent.

#### **Clermont Cove**

- 4.
  - A. 201 Clermont Avenue occupies land behind office and warehouse buildings between the 4600 block and the 5000 block of Eisenhower Avenue on the south and the railroad tracks on the north Map # 069.00-01-15.81
  - B. Area occupies about 15 acres, 100 feet wide and 3/4 mile long. It is heavily wooded and includes several Resource Protection Areas (RPAs). Appears to be one of the largest natural wooded areas in the city. Contains wildlife, including fox, deer, and other small mammals. Zoned UT. Currently owned by Norfolk Southern, or its successor.

- C. Two requests for use and development have been unsuccessful since 2000: 1. Seven story building and parking garage for 500 rental units and 2. VDOT highway construction staging yard. No current development proposals pending.
- D. All nearby parking is in private lots associated with nearby warehouse/commercial uses.
- E. Retain as natural area in the short term. Longer-term uses could include a nature park with trails to provide both access to the interior of the site and a pedestrian and bike link between east and west Eisenhower Avenue and nearby offices.
- F. 2004 assessment is \$4.6 million.
- G. Right of first refusal, acquisition or an easement with public access trail. Some streambank restoration may be necessary if acquired.

### **Monticello Park Area**

#### **5.**

- A. 312 Beverly, a lot behind 306 Beverly, and 3104, 3104B, 3106A, & 3106 Russell.
- B. Hilly with lots of oaks and mature canopy. Fences separate properties from Monticello Park. Migratory bird habitat contiguous to the habitat of Monticello Park. Could not access because private property.
- C. One property (3104B) is vacant (no frontage, 1.3 acres) and owned by the same person as 3104 (1.6 acre lot, but with a house on it). 306 (lot behind) and 312 Beverly are along the east side of Monticello Park. 306 (lot behind) is 0.5 acre and 312 is 0.26 acre.
- D. Street parking.
- E. The park is an important natural area and area known for migratory bird stop-over habitat in this region.
- F. Russell Rd. properties are \$7-12/sq. ft. Beverly properties are \$3-4/sq. ft.,
- G. 306 Beverly (lot behind) is adjacent to 3104B, making the total cluster development nearly 4 acres. The park is known as an important stop over for migratory bird species and as such is a well known and important bird watching location due to the dense congregation of migratory warblers and other rare birds found here during the migration season.

### **George Washington Masonic Memorial**

#### **6.**

- A. George Washington Memorial Association -King St. and Callahan Drive; 101 Callahan Dr..
- B. The area of approximately 9 acres of open land behind the Temple is situated on a large terraced hill with grass and landscaping. The site abuts the American Water Company land and reservoir.
- C. An archaeological dig site is currently being excavated on the back 9 acre lot at the location of the old Dulaney Mansion.
- D. A large parking lot is located on the back side of the temple.
- E. Large back 9 acres could meet recreational needs for this area of Alexandria. Currently, access is restricted, but public can access grounds around the Temple itself.
- F. The total Masonic Temple land, 36 acres, is assessed at \$23,459,300 and zoned R-5.



- G. A full suite of tools should be considered on these nine acres, starting with a right of first refusal, and looking at easements and full purchase of some portion.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT SITES**

Each of these other sites contains important open space attributes. The first is listed because it includes the only large undeveloped City-owned parcels in the western part of the City. Although ultimately an active recreation area at this location may not be feasible, its location and the potential to combine it with other nearby properties merits serious attention. The remaining three lots are existing open sites in residential areas which should be reviewed to determine how best their open space attributes can be retained, which may include a combination of protection along with existing or future development.

### **Seminary/Beauregard**

#### **7.**

- A. Three (maybe more) properties at the northwest corner of Seminary Road and Beauregard Street. Property #1 is the corner right of way property; property #2 is 5101 Seminary Rd; and Property #3 is 5143 Seminary Rd.
- B. Major Intersection with traffic lights. Flowing north along Beauregard from the property is a wooded intermittent stream. Mostly flat vacant land. Trees to the south end of lot on Beauregard. Several properties around the corner are undeveloped, including two down Beauregard that have a wooded intermittent stream.
- C. Two of three properties (#1 and #3) owned by City. Property #1 was originally acquired for the widening of Beauregard Street and is to be enhanced with landscaping as a condition of CDD for Winkler Development. Property #2 contains Potomac Dry Cleaners, parking area and nearly surrounds the corner property. Property #3 is a fairly level lot with a few small trees.
- D. No parking on street; possible parking at the end of nearby cul-de-sac or on dry cleaner parking area.
- E. Park in West End of City.
- F. Property #1 (corner lot) is 47,670 sq. feet and City owns it; property #2 is approximately 14,000 square feet and assessed at \$536,500; property #3 is 24,784 square feet and assessed at \$203,400.
- G. Good prospect for open space, as two of the three lots are already owned by the City.

### **Lloyds Lane/Russell Road Park**

#### **8.**

- A. 1904-1910 Russell Road. Northwest corner of Lloyds Lane and Russell Rd.
- B. Many large, specimen trees. Wetland area (former pond/creek) at front of property with an intermittent stream running along the north property boundary. Adjacent to other large, overzoned parcels to south, east and north across W. Windsor at the St. Stevens/St. Agnes grade school. Highlighted on Figure 15 (OS Opportunities) of the Open Space Plan.
- C. One large home and tennis court on property. Circular driveway in front of home and driveway back to tennis court. Proposed development by current owner would put three new residences, one replacing the existing home. Proposed development

would protect many of the large trees on the hillside and protect the wooded corner parcel at Lloyds and Russell with the spring.

- D. If circular drive kept, parking off street, otherwise only street parking.
- E. Potential for nearly 3 acre park in an area of the city with no parks nearby. Another large, undeveloped parcel exists directly across Lloyds lane that could expand the park.
- F. Sold for \$1.6 million to developer in Spring 2003. Probably sell \$2.5 million to cover lost profits. \$20/sq. ft. estimated to buy from developer.

**9. Braddock/Valley/Ridge**

- A. 2416 & 2430 Ridge Road.
- B. Wooded hillside with many trees and understory -best appreciated from Braddock Road view. Timber Branch stream runs through the property. Has high natural resource value.
- C. Zoned R-8. Property includes five separate parcels, includes 3.9 acres, and has two large homes on it facing Ridge Road. Some private land may not be developable due to slope and Timber Branch resource protection area on the property.
- D. Limited street parking.
- E. Public natural area.
- F. Land assessed at \$3.5 million (all five parcels).
- G. Donated or purchased easement should be explored for those portions that could be developed.

**Second Presbyterian Church -North Quaker/Janneys Lane**

**10.**

- A. 1400 Janneys Lane. Property of the National Capital Presbytery. 6.07 acres (237, 895 sq.ft).
- B. A number of historic and specimen trees on property.
- C. Zoned R-20. Current structures include a house built 1910 (in disrepair) and a brick auxiliary church building built early 1960s (in good repair). Under current zoning could yield up to 12 lots. Ten lots and a public road, are being proposed by a developer. The developer has indicated it would donate 1.1 acres of open space in the form of two of these lots located at the corner to the City. Historic and specimen trees will remain.
- D. Parking is available now on two church parking lots on site. Under proposed development plan, parking will be removed and all residences will have ample off street parking. Public parking will be permitted on the interior public street.
- E. The developer and current owner have worked with the Planning Department to preserve the most important public aspects of the site including specimen trees and keeping the site open at the corner. The applicant is willing to deed 1.1 acres at the corner to the City with no outlay of city funds. Although this particular area does not lack for open space, its location is at the geographic center of City and its proximity to other open institutional land nearby merited attention in the Open Space Plan. If the City were to acquire it, the design and use of the full site and the two existing structures would have to be evaluated in relationship to the Park and Recreation Strategic Plan and Needs Assessment.

- F. Assessed value (04) -\$2,807,900. Based on a recent appraisal for the City, the fair market value of the site is deemed to be \$6.3 million. A higher price may be necessary to acquire the entire site given the contract purchasers' profit expectation.
- G. At the request of City Council and the City Manager, the Committee ranked this property under the goals criteria. Although it is included in this priority site list because it is cited in the Open Space Plan, when evaluated in relation to the other priority sites, it received the lowest score. The proposed site plan for eight houses with a one acre open corner of open space satisfies the goals of the Open Space Plan. The Committee does not recommend that the City acquire the property.

## **II. OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES LIST**

The list that follows contains a number of properties around the City which merit close examination as open space candidates. They are listed in no particular order and we know more investigation will be required for many of these parcels. This list is also not exhaustive. We had more candidates ourselves and we expect and will ask for and certainly will welcome proposed additions from the community. Each of these on this list will also need to be weighed carefully against appropriate criteria.

As the Open Space Steering Committee and the community at large adds to this list and works through a criteria and ranking process, we expect some of the opportunities found here to rise in importance for consideration. In addition, threats and opportunities we cannot anticipate at this time may also make some of these sites rise to the top for consideration. We hope the City will have a thoughtful process in place to afford opportunity in these cases, without foreclosing action on the identified and agreed-upon priority sites.

### **Del Ray Corner Community Garden**

**1.**

- A. Numbers 1 & 7 East Del Ray are located at the southeast corner of Del Ray Ave and Commonwealth Ave.
- B. Two adjacent lots on the corner at a 4-way stop. Just over 1/3 acre.
- C. No impervious cover.
- D. Street parking, unrestricted on opposite side of Del Ray.
- E. Passive use.
- F. \$21-24/sq. ft. (\$300,000 total).

### **King Street to Rosemont Neighborhood Path**

**2.**

- A. 2723 King Street First Christian Church (rear portion). Map # 052.02-06-06
- B. Deep (784 ft.) lot that connects King Street to Summers Drive cul de sac. Back 100 feet of lot is wooded area with a short, but steep, slope. 2.6 acres. Zoned R-8.
- C. Church building and driveway on front portion of lot. Parking lot and playground on middle portion of lot.
- D. N/a
- E. Two uses: 1. Neighborhood path (on driveway and through wood) to connect King Street /Janneys Lane area and Rosemont. Path has been used for years for cut through pedestrian traffic and as a safe route to school. There are currently no official pedestrian or bicycle routes connecting these neighborhoods between Scroggins and Walnut, a distance of about 3/4 mile. 2. Back 100 feet of lot is a nice wooded area suitable for preservation as open space.
- F. Property assessment for 2004 is \$2.1 million for entire site.

**Forest Behind Beth El Temple -Col. Ellis Ave.**

3.

- A. 3832 and 3834 Seminary Rd. Owned by Carrier Keating and Patricia Ruffner.
- B. Total of 3.1 acres. Historically drained to Strawberry Run until interrupted by Seminary Ridge development.
- C. R-20 zoning. No CBA or RPA or wetland designations. Site plan submitted about 6 years ago but withdrawn. Home on the property fronting Seminary Road. City installed a storm drain system in lower areas.
- D. Street parking or provided by Beth El Temple.
- E. Small walking park. Potential for easements.
- F. 2004 assessment \$2.3 million for property with house.
- G. Would change the character of the Seminary Ridge neighborhood if developed.

**Alexandria Water Co -Duke St., Abutting GW Masonic Memorial**

4.

- A. 2505 Duke St. on the southwest side of the George Washington Masonic Memorial.
- B. Zoned UT (utilities) adjacent to property zoned R-5. Open space areas on property.
- C. Maintenance and administrative office buildings exist on the property, as well as a large, currently unused reservoir. D. Parking lot on site.
- E. Public open space. Could be combined with purchasing the back part of the GW Masonic Memorial property to make a larger public open space.
- F. Unknown -assessed by State Corp.
- G. It should be addressed as part of any open space opportunity on the GW Masonic Memorial. A right of first refusal could be a good tool here.

**Strawberry Hills/Tarleton Area Neighborhood Park .**

5.

- A. 4214 Duke Street at southwest corner with South Gordon Street Map # 060.01-02- 02
- B. Area is triangular on 1 & 1/3 acre with 174 feet of frontage on Duke Street. Mature trees border the property along Duke and Gordon Streets. Ground slopes off from trees to provide a bowl like effect and buffer from Duke. Zoned R-2-5. Currently owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- C. A parking lot and driveway mostly take up the site. The parking lot appears to be unused and may have been used by the adjacent Verizon Building when it had a much larger workforce.
- D. Street parking is available on Gordon and use of the site could include a parking lot. As a neighborhood park, most visits would be by foot or bike.
- E. Neighborhood park with uses best determined by local residents. Park would provide urban relief in a densely populated area on busy Duke Street.
- F. Assessment for 2004 is \$987,200.
- G. Acquisition or perhaps explore a trade with the State.

**6. Mt. Vernon/Del Ray Community Gathering Place**

- A. Two options (see descriptions 1 & 2 below): (1) Southeast corner of Mt. Vernon & E. Del Ray and vacant parcel south on Mt. Vernon (201 E. Del Ray and 2207 Mt. Vernon); and (2) the parcel next to the city parking lot at the southeast corner of E. Oxford and Mt. Vernon (2309 Mt. Vernon).
- B. (1) Two adjacent parcels; one vacant (1<sup>st</sup> south of intersection on east side of street); and one developed. Vacant parcel used for dancing/music at Art on the Avenue. One old oak and a medium-old blue spruce. (2) Parcel next to (south of) the City parking lot is 2958 ft<sup>2</sup>. No significant natural features, but is a good central location and is next to the Del Ray Farmers Market.
- C. (1) One structure on corner lot (occupied by Bean Creative Web Services).  
(2) One dwelling built in 1920 covers about half the lot.
- D. (1) Street parking only; (2) City parking lot next to lot.
- E. (1,2) Potential community square, gathering area. In heart of Del Ray neighborhood.
- F. (1) Assessment unknown, but over \$20/sq. ft. (2) 2004 assessment = \$230,500.
- G. Second option is being considered by the Mt. Vernon Planning Committee as a high priority.

**Mirant Power Plant**

**7.**

- A. On the Potomac River, north of Old Town.
- B. Large industrial plant.
- C. Huge coal piles and power plant. In time (undetermined) this plant will likely convert to different fuel source and the operational foot print of the facility could be greatly reduced, as much as 50%, presenting a critical waterfront open space opportunity.
- D. Critical opportunity at some point for potential park, neighborhood ball fields, paths, trails, boating facilities.
- E. Street parking only, unless purchased. F. Price Unknown.
- G. There is no current indication of change of ownership and/or operation which might result in a decrease in the footprint of the operation which would allow for open space creation. High priority if Mirant decides to close down.

**Forest Behind Free Methodist Church -Polk Ave. at Buzzard's Gap**

**8.**

- A. Portions of 4915 and 4901 Polk Ave.
- B. Forested steep slope with large trees and wildlife. Adjacent to private open space conservation area protected by recent Pickett Ridge development approval. Natural resource areas.
- C. Zoned R-20. If church sold, could be developed for 4-5 residences.
- D. On street and school parking.
- E. Nature trail and natural public open space surrounding trail. Easement approved as part of the Pickett Ridge development.

- F. Assessed at \$8.19 per square foot. Purchase price would be between \$300,000 and \$500,000. Might consider purchasing a "right of first refusal" option from church.

**Finks Property -Southview Terrace**

9.

- A. 720 Southview Terrace
- B. Two lots zoned R-5 -large sloping back yards leveling at the bottom. Lot #1 is 41,103 sq. ft. and Lot #2 is 14,036 sq. ft.
- C. House on Lot #1 -Lot #1 abuts a triangular lot on Moncure and Southview.
- D. Driveway and street parking.
- E. Potential passive park and gardens. City could acquire lot #2 and portion of Lot #1 or look into easement options on both or just Lot #1.
- F. Lot #1 assessed at \$830,800; Lot #2 = \$278,900. Price per square foot = \$20.13.

**Inner City Urban Park**

10.

- A. 724, 726, & 728 North Patrick Street at the southwest corner with Madison Street across Patrick from the Charles Houston Recreation Center Map # 054.04-05-02, 03, 04.
- B. 724 and 726 Patrick total 6600-sq. ft. and are vacant. 728 Patrick is 3649-sq. ft. with a building. Combined area is 10200-sq. ft. Zoned CSL. Rest of block is zoned RB. Site location and proximity to recreation center, but is separated from it by busy Route 1.
- C. Small brick 1800 sq. ft. building.
- D. Limited street parking in the area; visits would be by bike or foot.
- E. Neighborhood park. Park would provide urban relief in a densely populated area. Charles Houston Rec. Center property has limited space and the building will soon be undergoing renovation.
- F. Assessment for 2004 on all 3 lots totals \$782,000. Property is currently on the market.
- G. Alternatives for an urban park in the area of the city are at nearby undeveloped properties on the northeast and northwest comers of Columbus and Madison. 735 and 736 Columbus (Map # 054.04-08-01 & 02) combined have an area of 6200 sq. ft. and assessed value of \$500,000. Adjacent St. Joseph's Church owns lots. 9700-sq. ft. parcel assessed at \$773,800 at 805 Columbus (Map # 054.04-02-08) owned by Beulah Baptist Church. The church also owns 2 adjacent parcels totaling an additional 7200 sq. ft. and assessed at an additional \$578,000.

**11. Yates Properties – King Street Across from Janneys**

- A. 2525, 2605, 2705, 2705A, 2705B King Street
- B. Two historic homes (2525 and 2605) built in 1819 and 1870, respectively. 2525 is mostly grassy with some trees and slopes down to the east and abuts another lot in Rosemont. 2605 is mostly grassy and slopes down to a property on Summers Drive and West Masonic View. Other lots are also grassy with some trees. All undergrowth has been cleared on all properties.
- C. All lots are zoned R-8. Homes are built on 2525, 2605, and 2705. Lot sizes are: 2525 = 108,130 sq.ft.; 2605 = 86,858 sq. ft.; 2705 = 20,530 sq. ft.; 2705A = 21,043 sq. ft.; 2705B = 7,013 sq. ft.
- D. Street parking.
- E. Passive manner due to the topography. Lots at 2525 and 2605 have historic houses and these could have private easements. Passive, privately-owned open space
- F. Assessed values are totals (lot and home): 2525 = \$2,303,800; 2605 = \$927,000; 2705 = \$612,300; 2705A = \$292,500; and 2705B = \$43,900.
- G. Strong easement opportunities.

**12. Ball Property -604/604A Janney's Lane**

- A. Two adjacent properties owned by William and Patricia Ball III.
- B. Out lots with Janneys Lane entrance. Large lot with house and sloping wooded area towards East Taylor Run.
- C. Zoned R-8. House with driveway. 604 is 90,387 sq. ft; 604A is 3,947 sq. ft.
- D. Parking.
- E. Urban forest and natural resource area. Easement to protect trees and terrain.
- F. Assessed at: 604 = \$1,993,100; 604A = \$18,100.

**Arlandria Urban Playground**

**13.**

- A. Property is on west side of Commonwealth Ave. between Reed Ave. and W. Glebe. A church is to the south and an electrical substation is to the north.
- B. Vacant land. Grassy area between town home parking lot and Commonwealth.
- C. Vacant. Less than a half acre.
- D. Parking at townhomes and on Commonwealth.
- E. Two other tot lots and Cora Kelly School are very near to this lot.
- F. Unknown.

**Hufy Property- 214 West Alexandria Ave.**

**14.**

- A. 214 West Alexandria Ave. Can be partially viewed from Russell Road at elevated sidewalk.
- B. Hidden, mostly-wooded lot with many large trees.
- C. Historic home built in 1890. Lot is 59,513 sq. ft. Property is only directly accessible from a small frontage on Alexandria Ave.



- D Onsite parking. Street parking.
- E Urban forest and tree canopy. Natural resources. Easement.  
It has no frontage other than Alexandria Ave.
- F Total assessment = \$1,071,200.

**15. 2627 Foster Avenue.**

- A. 2627 Foster Avenue. Foster is a short dead end street off Fairbanks Avenue off Seminary Road in the far West End of the City.
- B. The property is gently sloping with a house (954 sq. feet) situated on the left end of the property. The house was built in 1950. The property is the last lot on the dead end street, with few trees.
- C. Property zoned R-12.
- D. Driveway. Parking at the end of the street.
- E. Potential small passive park area. Good candidate for easement.
- F. Lot size is 20,602 sq. feet. Current assessment is \$335,200 for property.
- G. Open space in West End of the City.

### **III. TRAILS OPPORTUNITIES**

"Connecting Alexandria's Neighborhoods" with multi-use paths is one of the objectives of the Open Space Plan. Following is a list of potential sites for trail connectivity. Sites may be owned by a governmental entity, or could be candidates for easements or acquisition. Excluded are on-street bike routes. Meetings with neighborhood groups may identify more opportunities, and are needed relative to the inclusion of any future sites into the City's Multi-Use Trail and Bicycle Transportation Master Plan. Future additions would come before City Council through a separate process related to proposed additions in the master plan.

#### **Non-City owned properties**

1. Make permanent the temporary Mt. Vernon Trail alignment at Hunting Towers' waterfront. Property is owned by VDOT. (See Priority Site history #2 for detail.)  
King Street to Rosemont connection path at the First Christian Church. Property is privately owned.
2. (See Opportunities List #2 for detail.)  
Buzzard's Gap/Pickett's Ridge. This trail would provide a safe and short route connecting schools and neighborhoods and extended between Pickett Street and Polk Avenue. City Council approved an easement on private property on February 24, 2004.
3. Between Seminary Road and Braddock Road behind the fire station would be an extension of the Buzzards Gap route to get to Ft. Ward Park on land that is a part of the Seminary Forest Apartments property. (See Priority Site history #3 for detail.)  
Dartmouth Road between Crown View Drive and Skyhill Road is currently dead-ended and needs a path. Walkers currently make their way around a fence. Property is privately owned.
4. Trail between the end of Francis Hammond Parkway and Forest Park has been used for many years.
5. A stream runs along FH Pkwy so this land is in an RPA. However, it is not clear from the site if the path is on city or private land.
6. Stevenson Park to Yoakum Parkway to connect this city park to condo community. Steep terrain would make this a difficult project. Private property.
7. Potomac Yards Linear Park and trail is to be funded and constructed by the developer.
8. Potomac Yards to Potomac Greens pedestrian bridge over rail line has been subject of potential change in approved plans. Local neighborhood concerns have been raised about public access from the proposed bridge.
9. Hooffs Run Bridge needed at the southern boundary of the Alexandria Sanitation Authority (ASA) Plant. Reconstruction of previous trail along the ASA southern boundary is included in WWB Plan. Previous trail through ASA is no longer feasible. Alexandria Bike Plan identified need for bridge in 1998. Private, public, and ASA property.
- 10.

11. East Eisenhower development plan contemplates trails along Mill Race and Hooffs Run.
12. Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project has off-street bicycle and pedestrian trails and side paths included in plans for Jones Point, Washington Street, US Route 1, and Telegraph Road. Plans need to be implemented.  
Develop a pedestrian trail along the back of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Cameron
13. Run Regional Park and the City Animal Shelter. NVRP A and City property.  
Include a trail in the future as part of a natural stream reclamation of Backlick Run west from Booth
14. Park to the City line. Private property.

### **City-owned property**

- Open the Mt. Jefferson Greenway in Del Ray between Raymond and Jeff Davis Highway. This is city
15. owned property that is currently fenced off. A connecting Trail proposal was rejected in 1998 bike plan because of promises made by city officials in years past that it would not be developed. Probably only reclamation by City. A former WO&D railroad track. The Greenway extension northwest is problematic, since the city has already allowed development to occur in the former railroad right-of-way.  
Complete Tarleton Park trail by placing a gravel path across 200 feet of grassy area. Neighbors have
16. been favorable to this path improvements but have concerns about the number and frequency of city vehicles using the paths and they fear improvements would promote city vehicle use.  
Construct a path from Raleigh Avenue to connect to Holmes Run, Foxchase Shopping Center with
17. Foxchase Apartments and other neighborhoods.  
Path and bridge or weir across Holmes Run at Chambliss would make a safe neighborhood
18. connection and join with Fairfax County planned trail running west to Columbia Pike.
19. Build a trail underpass for the Holmes Run trail to avoid a dangerous street crossing at Beauregard.
20. Build a short trail to connect the backside of Ft. Ward Park to Van Dorn Street.
21. Complete trail loop on the south side of Backlick Run in Ben Brenman Park.
22. Bike Path Easement on North Commonwealth. On the last quarter mile Commonwealth, ending at Four-Mile Run, a green strip of land exists in all but a short spot from the intersection of Reed Ave. This green strip is on the east side of Commonwealth, opposite of the school. This is a very popular commute route for Alexandria residents into the District. A bike path in this green strip would keep

bikes off the roadway, which is barrow in front of the school. This may be city right-of-way, or be done with an easement from Jack Taylor and the new townhome development on their western property lines (past their fences).

2619 Randolph. Connects the Mt. Jefferson Greenway with Randolph. Could be nice bike access to

23.

Greenway if completed.

## **IV. ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

This section includes additional sites and opportunities that require attention and research. Reclamation opportunities are those involving public land that needs to be reclaimed because private uses have been allowed to encroach over the years, depriving the public of the benefits of open space.

Reclamation Opportunity at Francis Hammond School. Referred to sometimes as "Death Valley",

1. this area west of the school is currently an athletic area for schools and Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities. Some storage on the property and signs indicate restricted use.
2. Russell Road easement opportunities exist in several locations on the west side of the street between Alexandria Country Day School and Braddock Road. Four parcels on the west side of Russell Road, north of St. Stevens/St. Agnes school and south of Woodland Terrace are overzoned. An easement (or easements) would protect these wooded areas as open space. These parcels connect to wooded portions of St. Stevens/St. Agnes and the proposed park one more block south. Lloyds lane parcel (see description above) is in this stretch of Russell Rd. Another parcel exists on Russell and Lloyds lane on the southwest corner of that intersection. The parcel is approximately 1 acre.
3. 4817 Peacock Ave. Wooded glade surrounded by steep slopes. Zoned R-20 and approximately 1.25 acre. Could act as a buffer against new Pickett Ridge development. Easement candidate.
4. 150 South Gordon Street has a nice open space next to a residential area and across for Tarleton footpath that is part of a lot with an industrial building on it suitable for an easement for a neighborhood park and permanent buffer for residential area.
5. 1301 Powhatan Street 6541-sq. ft. vacant lot owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia.
6. 460 Strathblane Place one acre lot with 1860 Civil War house and adjacent 4638 Strathblane place 3/4 acre vacant lot
7. 1201 Key Drive. Wooded corner lot. Approximately 2.2 acres zoned R-20. Easement candidate.
8. Corner lot on southeast corner of Russell and Rosecrest Ave. Small triangular lot. Would make nice small native plant and tree garden. Most likely an easement opportunity.
9. Scroggins lots on southeast side of street. At least eight oversized lots with homes located along Scroggins Lane. Because of zoning, these are possible infill locations.
10. Oakland Terrace oversized lots. Several oversized lots could be infilled due to zoning.
11. Additional old homes on oversized lots (year built):
  - 1001A Janneys Lane (1840)
  - .403 W. Masonic View (1850) .418 Summers Dr. (1890)
  - .614 W. Braddock Rd. (1900) .1203 Orchard St. (1910)
  - .622 W. Braddock Rd. (1910) .2203 Scroggins Rd. (1901)
  - .1200 Russell Rd. (1900)

12. CLARENS

- A. 318 North Quaker Lane. Owner since 1994 is V. Thomas Lankford.
- B. 3.5 acres. Hill with House on top of rise and several outbuildings. Broad lawns, large caliper trees and historical structure on property built circa 1814-16. An 1850's school operated by Rev. George Smith, US military hospital and James M. Mason -a pre Civil War member of Congress. Mason drafted the fugitive slave law and Chairman of the US Senate foreign relations committee. During the War Mason was emissary to Great Britain of the Confederate States of America and involved in the "Trent" affair. Former Confederate President Jefferson Davis visited Clarens in 1870 for his final meeting with Mason and CSA General Samuel Cooper. CSA General Robert Lee also visited Clarens. Subsequently a girls school. Latter owned by William G. Thomas. Upon his sale of the property in the late 1980's, the property was subdivided (see 310 Quaker Lane).
- C. Zoned R-20. Tract was subdivided in 1968 creating the current 3.5-acre Clarens and adjacent 1.1 acre 310 Quaker lane property. It could not be ascertained if conservation, subdivision or historical easements exists on the house or land.
- D. Not applicable
- E. Clarens is an important architectural and cultural resource for the City of Alexandria and deserves high priority for protection of the structures, trees and land.
- F. Property is currently assessed at \$3.1 M (land -\$1.3).

13. THE COTTAGE

- A. 502 Quaker Lane, access from Trinity Drive and garden plot (3550 Trinity Drive). "The Cottage," early 19th. Century house. All properties are owned by Charles Hooff Jr. 502 Quaker Lane property (with the cottage) is 77,941 sq. ft. Side garden lot (3550 Trinity Pr.) is 26,943 sq. ft.
- B. Beautiful trees surrounding the house and old boxwood in adjacent garden.
- C. Zone R-20.
- D. *N/A*
- E. "The Cottage" is an important architectural and cultural resource in the City of Alexandria and deserves high priority for protection of the structure, trees and land.
- F. Assessment for 502 Quaker Lane is \$1.2M (land -\$792,300) and Trinity Dr. property \$ 418,900.
- G. Appropriate for a conservation and historical easement.

14. POTOMAC YARD DEVELOPMENT

Buy additional acreage either to create a real "central park" in this development, or to add to the active field acreage already allocated in the planning process (7 acres shared with the School Board for a potential school site).

### **City State and federal government owned properties**

In our review of parcels as candidates for open space consideration, many properties were identified with city and state ownership. We recommend a thorough review of property records to better identify government owned properties where a mutual open space interest may be served. Examples:

- 4214 Duke Street at southwest corner with South Gordon Street owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- 1301 Powhatan Street at the northeast with Bashford Lane owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Reclaim public land that has been encroached upon**

There are many parcels of city land and rights-of-way that have been encroached upon by private landowners, thus effectively removing land from the city's open space inventory. Reclaiming these lost parcels is an enforcement issue that would not require use of any open space acquisition funds, yet could add considerably to the open space inventory. It would also demonstrate to city residents that the city places a high priority on its open space and public land, which belongs to all our citizens. We underscore the recommendation contained in the Open Space Plan that the city undertake a project to identify these encroachments and reclaim them as public open space. Examples:

- 2655 Duke Street at the corner with West Taylor Run Parkway. Encroachment by a commercial establishment using what may be RPA land as a parking lot. Taylor Run Citizens Association reported this about 2 years ago.
- W & OD right-of-way in Del Ray.
- Yates Gardens by Jones Point Park.

**Recommended  
Criteria For Open Space “Priority Sites” List**

1. To what degree does the property provide the public with benefits related to human values and experience?
  - a. To what degree does the property include trail connections or open space adjacent to or linking open spaces, natural areas, greenways and trails?
  - b. To what degree does the property meet an identified need for active or passive recreation?
  - c. To what degree is the property, or does the property contain elements or attributes, of known or potential historic or cultural significance?
  - d. To what degree does the property provide an opportunity to expand existing open space resources, such as parks, schools or institutional or private open spaces?
  - e. To what degree does the property provide an opportunity for pocket parks, gardens, green spaces or playgrounds?
  - f. To what degree does the property provide visual relief (light, air and green space) from the built environment?
2. To what degree does the property provide green infrastructure, including the protection of natural resources?
  - a. To what degree does the property provide for the protection of natural areas and maintain natural ecological processes?
  - b. To what degree does the property provide for the protection of habitat and support of native species?
  - c. To what degree does the property provide opportunities for improving the quality of air and water resources?
  - d. To what degree does the property provide the opportunity for stream restoration or preservation?
  - e. To what degree does the property include stands of mature trees?
  - f. To what degree does the property provide for the development or protection of wetlands?



3. To what degree will the benefits identified above be shared by or available to everyone in the City/city-wide?
4. To what degree will the open space benefits identified above be available to a neighborhood or other area of the City that is particularly deficient in open space?  
Is the site identified in the Open Space Plan or the RP&CA Strategic Master Plan; if it is
5. not, then to what degree would it, if acquired or protected as open space, meet the goals of those plans?

## Open Space Steering Committee Criteria Matrix

## Ranking Chart Priority Sites

Criterion	Sites									
	1. Waterfront	2. Mt. Vernon Trail	3. Seminary/Beauregard	4. Second Presbyterian	5. Ivor Lane	6. Lloyds Lane	7. Masonic Memorial	8. Ridge Road/Valley Drive	9. Monticello Park	10. Clermont Cove
1. Proximity to existing parks and trails.	3	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	3
2. Proximity to Schools.	1	1	1	1 ½	3	1	1	1	1	1
3. Proximity to natural resources areas.	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3
4. At street ending to provide neighborhood linkages.	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	1	3	1
5. Next to institutional properties with extensive open space.	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	3
6. Adjacent to or linking existing/ proposed trails, greenways.	3	3	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	3
7. Small lots in dense urban areas for pocket parks.	3	1	3	1	2	3	1	1	1	1
8. Land with significant trees, stopping terrain.	3	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
9. Properties of known historic value or cultural significance.	3	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	2	1
10. Areas with a high need for open space.	3	3	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	2
11. Open space and trail connections to Fairfax and Arlington counties.	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16 ½</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>